guidelines for determining admissions to engineering degree courses. It is one of the responsibilities of the AICTE to continuously monitor standards of engineering education and to take steps from time to time to ensure good standard.

For medical degree courses, the Medical Council of India has prescribed criteria for admission of students.

Reservation for Minorities in Public Employment and Educational Institutions

*94. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN:
SHRI S. MADHAVAN:

Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering giving separate reservation to religious Minorities in public employment and educational institutions in view of their backwardness;

(b) how many State Governments have provided such reservation to Muslims as a separate group among the Backward Classes;

(c) whether there is any constitutional bar against giving reservation to religious Minorities based on their backwardness; and

(d) whether Government will consider survey of the Socio-Economic backwardness of different Minorities in the country for giving benefit under Article 15 and 16?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI SITARAM KESRI): (a) to (d) There is no proposal for giving separate reservation to religious minorities in public employment and educational institutions. However, those sections of the minority communities which are socially and educationally backward have been included in the Central List of Other Backward Classes for the purposes of providing reservation in direct recruitment in civil posts and services under the Government of India.

The State Governments of Karnataka and Kerala have included "Muslims" as Other Backward Classes and are giving them benefits of Other Backward Classes.

The backward class of citizens contemplated in Article 16(4) is social backwardness and in Article 15(4) it is social and educational backwardness. Therefore, conduct of survey of socio-economic backwardness for giving benefit under Articles 15 and 16 does not arise.

Prediction for Monsoon

*95. DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the predictions for rain, monsoons in general, and rain-fed agriculture for the current year;

(b) whether it is normal or deficient;

(c) whether it has adversely affected the crops already; and

(d) the steps being taken to give a better forecasting of rains in advance?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR): (a) According to India Meteorological Department's (IMD) forecast, south-west monsoon season (June to September) rainfall in the current year is likely to be normal i.e. 97% of its long period average value within estimated error limit of ± 4%. No separate predictions of rain are made for rainfed agriculture or any other disaggregated level of geographical area.

(b) The total rainfall so far (1st June to 31st July, 1995) in the current monsoon season in the country is 95% of its long period average value which is normal and within the predicted limit.

(c) There was some initial delay in sowing of kharif crops due to delayed onset of monsoon in certain parts of the country. However, wide-spread rains received from 2nd week of July and